

INCORPORATING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE INTO TRIBAL WQS

Setting Designated Uses Consistent with Cultural Considerations



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Pueblo of Taos

Community Profile

- Located in North Central New Mexico
- Designated UNESCO World Heritage Site (1992)
- National Register of Historic Places (1960)
- Largest of the Eight Northern Pueblos in population and land base
- Tribal Enrollment: 2,410 members
- Elevation: 7,600
- 119,000 acres

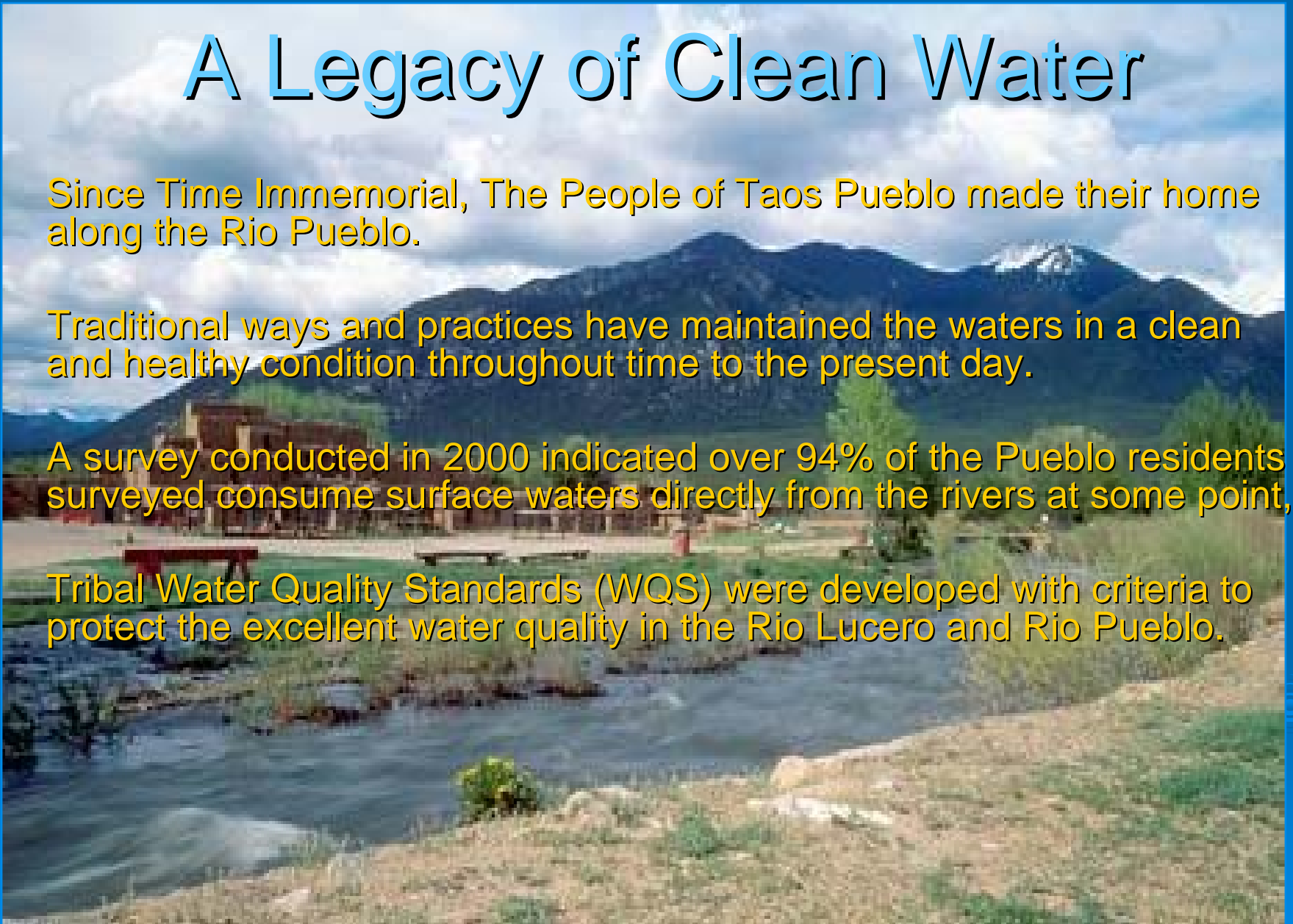
A Legacy of Clean Water

Since Time Immemorial, The People of Taos Pueblo made their home along the Rio Pueblo.

Traditional ways and practices have maintained the waters in a clean and healthy condition throughout time to the present day.

A survey conducted in 2000 indicated over 94% of the Pueblo residents surveyed consume surface waters directly from the rivers at some point,

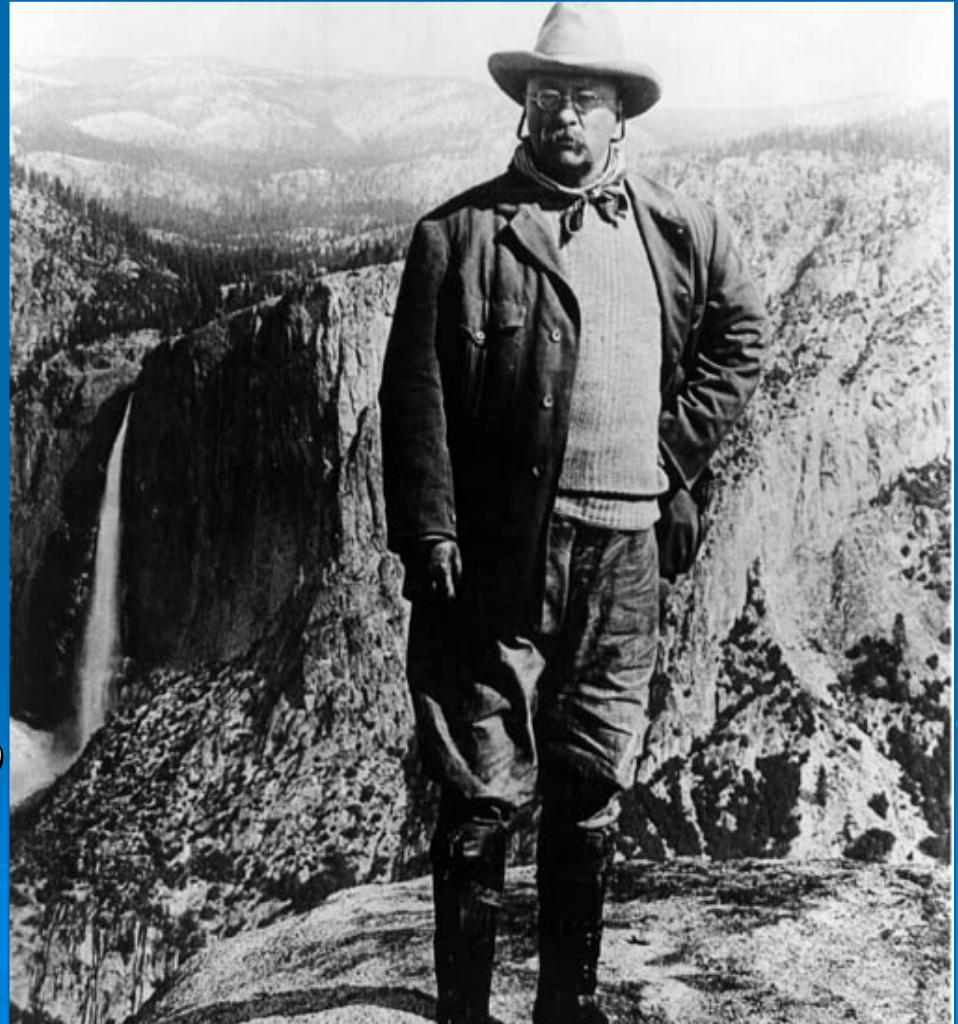
Tribal Water Quality Standards (WQS) were developed with criteria to protect the excellent water quality in the Rio Lucero and Rio Pueblo.



The 65 year struggle for the Return of the sacred Blue Lake

Blue Lake and its surrounding forests and mountains have been a religious shrine for centuries before the European arrival.

But in 1906 nature-loving, Indian-hating Theodore Roosevelt had incorporated Taos Pueblo lands the national forest system.



Taos Pueblo Elders Spoke

- “In all of its programs the Forest Service proclaims the supremacy of man over nature; we find this viewpoint contradictory to the realities of the natural world and to the nature of conservation.....The idea that man must subdue nature and bend its processes to his purposes is repugnant to our people.” – Testimony of the Taos Pueblo delegation to Congress.

Clash of Traditional and Modern

Under the USFS Multiple Use Policies, timbering, grazing, mineral exploration, and pollution from non Indian sportsman became a big problem.

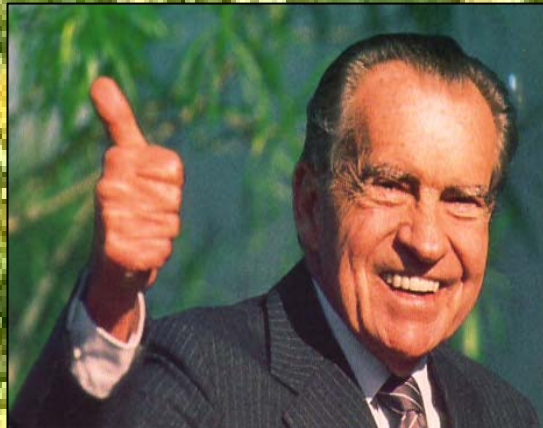
“We have always practiced conservation of those watersheds; they yield clear water today because of our long-standing care. Today it is more important than ever that the natural condition of those watersheds be preserved as the source of pure water in those streams.

Our life depends upon that water even more than does the welfare of the non-Indians downstream because we obtain our drinking water directly from the Rio Pueblo.”

- Excerpt from Congressional Testimony. Taos Pueblo Delegation

A Landmark Victory

- In 1970, after much lobbying and perseverance, the sacred Blue Lake was returned to Taos Pueblo by President Nixon under PL 91-550.
- Since the return, the 48,000 acre tract has been managed per the Wilderness Act.
- Other progressive policies of the Nixon era included passage of PL 93-638, The Indian Self Determination Act.



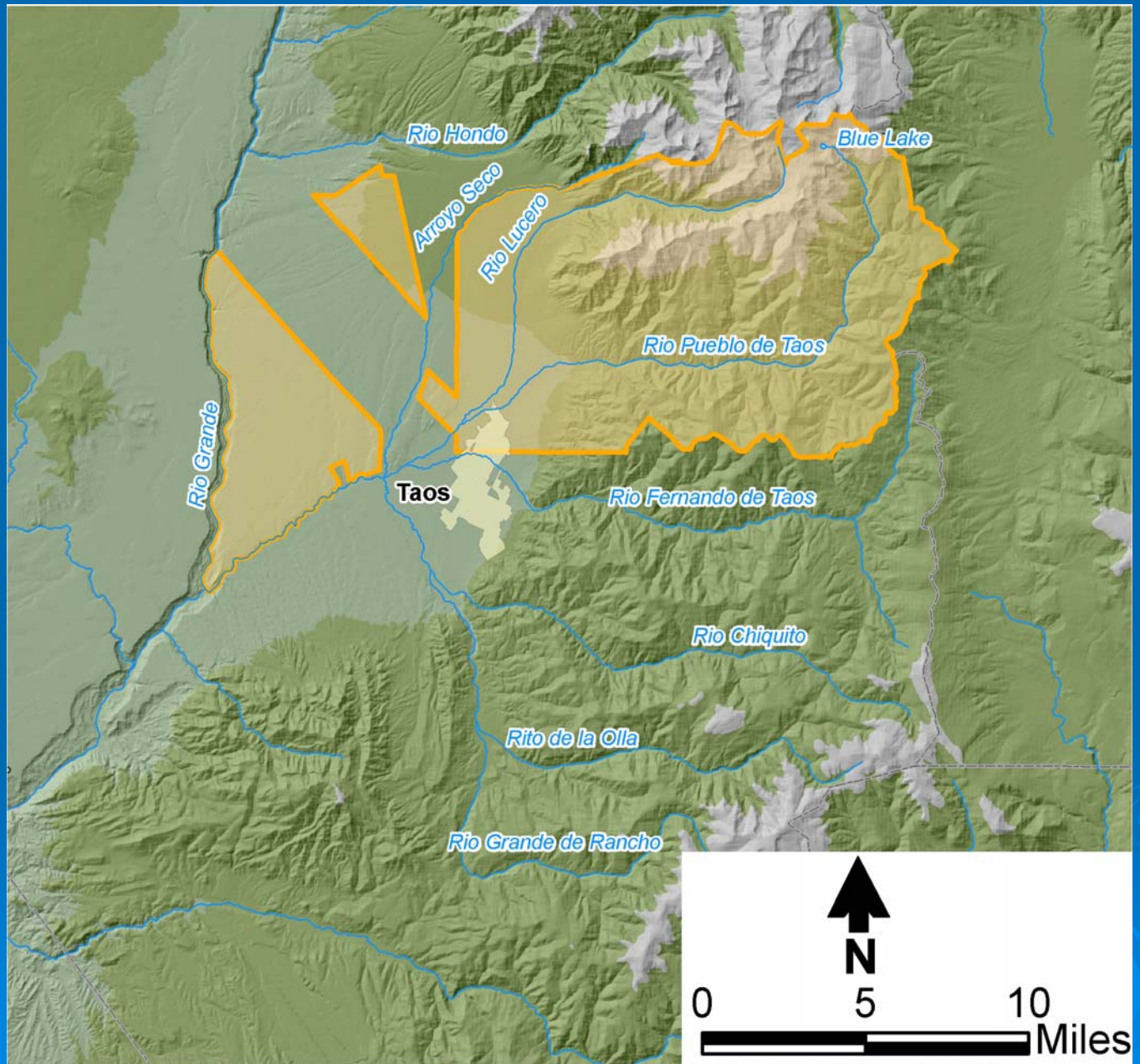
Taos Pueblo Water Quality Standards

- Adopted by Taos Pueblo on December 2001
- Designates existing and attainable uses for Pueblo waters, including OTRW.
- Sets numeric and narrative standards associated with tribally determined Designated Uses,
- Taos Pueblo Water Quality Standards approved by EPA in June 2006.

Establishing Expectations

- In this phase the tribe asks what are the goals for the watershed.
- Traditional tribal knowledge was incorporated into monitoring design, e.g., known river use sites, drinking water, herbs collected there, etc.,
- Traditional knowledge is used to establish Designated Uses in WQS as well.

Taos Pueblo Area Map



Impaired Designated Uses

High quality coldwater fishery.

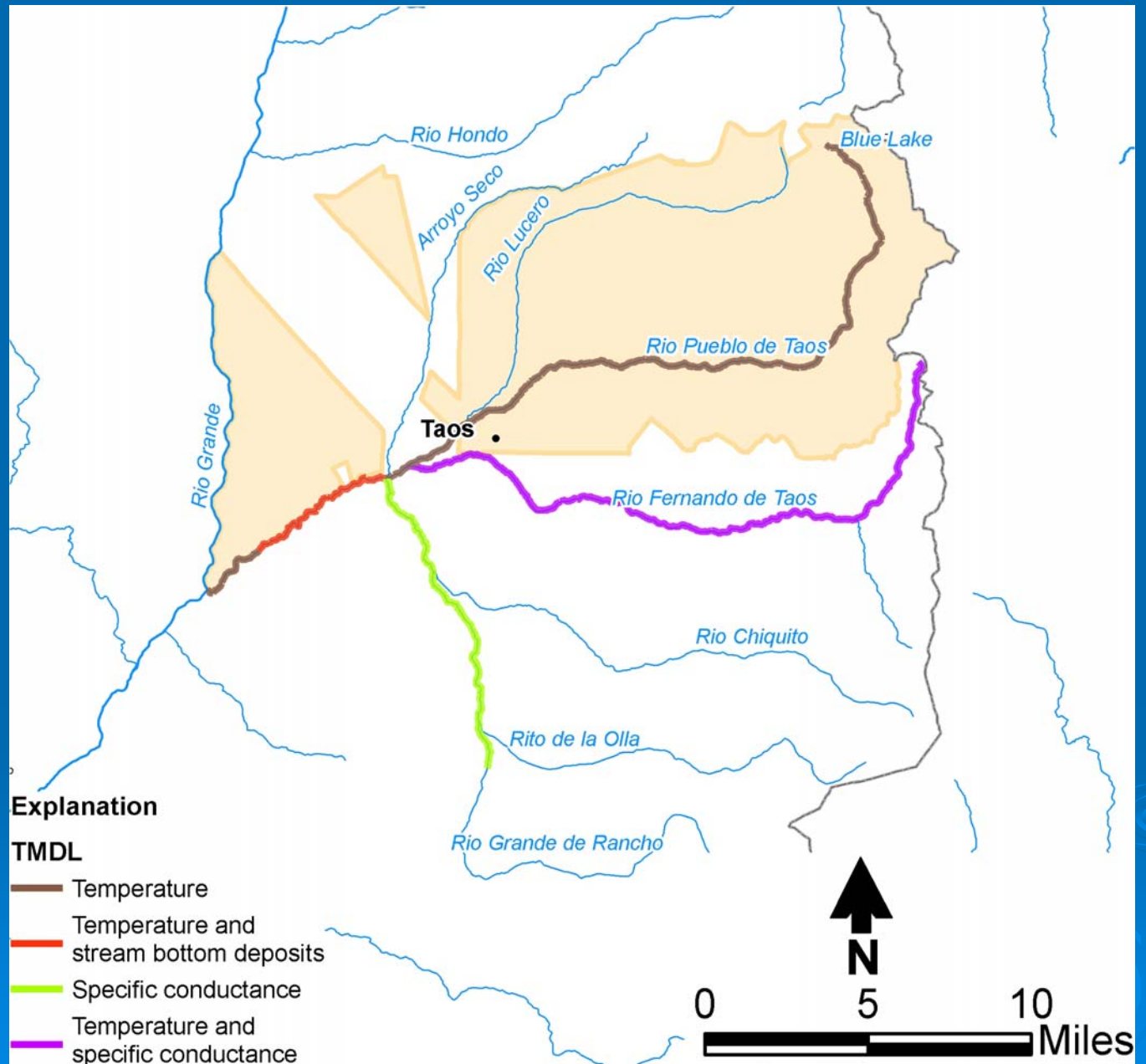
Impaired by: Temperature/Dissolved Minerals

Sources of Impairment: Recreation and Tourism Activities, Riparian and Upland grazing, septic tanks, natural sources, land disposal, land development, highway maintenance and runoff, habitat modification, grazing related sources, construction, bank and shoreline modification/de-stabilization, agriculture.

Need for Cooperation and Coordination

- Below the Town of Taos, the state of New Mexico has written TMDL's for stream bottom deposits and temperature.
- According to New Mexico state law, the state boundary is defined as the middle of the channel.
- Portions of the Taos reservation are below the TOT and have the rivers as boundaries,
- Therefore, tribal WQS apply to these same waters.

Water Quality Impaired Reaches near Taos Pueblo



Developing Baseline Conditions

- In 1990, Taos Pueblo and the rest of the 8 Northern Pueblos of New Mexico submitted applications for Treatment as a State pursuant to 1987 Reauthorization of the Clean Water Act §518.
- Shortly thereafter the Pueblo of Isleta's WQS were approved by EPA.
- The 8 Northern Pueblos consortia developed a set of generic WQS based on the New Mexico WQS, Taos opted out and choose to develop a set of standards specific to its lands and Existing and Designated Uses.

FY 06 Sampling Locations

